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New York Life Revitalizing High School Libraries Initiative Site Receives National Recognition

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 4, 2005 – At a time when high school reform is gaining momentum throughout the nation, and stakes for improving student achievement at the secondary level are higher than ever before, the efforts of corporate philanthropy in addressing pressing needs in America’s high schools have become critical. National recognition of the New York Life Foundation-funded *Revitalizing High School Libraries* initiative in San Francisco, Minneapolis, and Tampa provides the kind of acknowledgment by educators that speaks to the impact such efforts are having in high poverty, low-performing schools around the nation.

Begun in 2003 and administered through the San Francisco Education Fund (a member of the Public Education Network), the New York Life Revitalizing High School Libraries project at Mission High School in San Francisco was one of only nine projects from an astounding 128 submissions to receive honorable mention in the first annual TEAMS competition, sponsored by the Thomson Gale educational publishing company and Library Media Connection magazine.

TEAMS (Teachers and Media Specialists Influencing Student Achievement) Awards were presented at a special reception held in conjunction with the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) national conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania earlier this month. The TEAMS Award was created to recognize the critical collaboration between teachers and media specialists in promoting learning and increasing student achievement. A panel of education industry professionals and Thomson Gale staff evaluated the nominations based upon:

- Demonstrated collaboration between media specialists and teachers during the 2004/05 school year
- Effective techniques that have a positive impact on student learning and achievement
- Support received from school leadership
- Ability for others to replicate this best practice

Mission High School’s Digital Portfolio, according to Robin Mencher, a program director at the San Francisco Education Fund, is an online collection of individual students' language arts portfolios created in its library media center and designed to be a core component of the school’s performance-based assessment system. The library media specialist at Mission stated that five teachers worked with 340 11th and 12th grade students to create the portfolios, which were made up of several pieces of writing including research papers.

For more information about the Thomson Gale TEAMS Award, go to www.galeschools.com/TEAMS.

Public Education Network (PEN) is a national organization of local education funds (LEFs) and individuals working to improve public schools and build citizen support for quality public education in low-income communities across the nation. PEN and its 88 LEF members work in 34 states and the District of Columbia on behalf of 11.5 million children in more than 16,000 schools, seeking to bring the community voice into the debate on quality public education in the firm belief that an active, vocal constituency will ensure every child, in every community, a quality public education. For more information on New York Life Revitalizing High School Libraries, please visit: publiceducation.org/highschools.asp

San Francisco Education Fund is a community-based nonprofit organization established to improve the quality of teaching and learning in San Francisco public schools so that all students in this diverse community have the education necessary for full participation in the economic, civic, and cultural life of our society. The Ed Fund believes that strong public schools are critical to San Francisco's viability and that the community must take action to ensure their success. By acting as a bridge between the community and the classroom, the Ed Fund increases the availability and impact of resources for students and teachers throughout San Francisco public schools.

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